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Erin Brockovich's environmentalists address Bridgeton landfill

by Elizabeth Eisele/ KMOV.com Staff

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(KMOV.com) -- A foul stench and concerns about safety near the Bridgeton landfill have garnered national attention, including a visit from a lawyer and environmental investigator with the Erin Brockovich group. They answered questions on Saturday concerning the impact of the Bridgeton landfill on the area.

Residents, property owners, business owners and any other concerned community members can attend the meeting at the International Union of Operating Engineers Saturday from 11-12:30 p.m.

According to Brockovich's website, those attending the meeting would receive “straightforward answers.”

The International Union of Operating Engineers is located at 3449 Hollenburg Drive in Bridgeton.

Brockovich became famous in the '90s as an environmental activist, and was later portrayed in a movie bearing her name.

The West Lake Landfill in Bridgeton contains two areas where waste from World War II-era nuclear weapons manufacturing was buried in the 1970s.

In March, an Environmental Protection Agency survey of the landfill determined radioactive waste buried there did not pose a danger to the public.

The report was released as operators of the landfill next door have been removing six pipes they believe will help eliminate a strong odor that is bothering residents who live nearby.

But a group of concerned citizens announced work being done to fix the smoldering deep within the site isn't working.

The group, called Missouri Coalition for the Environment, said a fire continues to move toward the radioactive waste. They said it has moved 200 feet closer in the last three months.

The pipe-removal project, expected to last through mid-June, is also expected to make the smell worse for about two weeks. Eventually, the company will put a plastic cap over the landfill.

The company has offered to relocate about 270 households within a mile of the landfill while the work proceeds.